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for any such compromise was hopelessly passed. We are occasionally surprised to find how early certain proposed political reforms were introduced: for example, in 1848 Mr. Lawrence, of New York, offered an amendment embodying a system of proportional voting.

It is a little difficult to obtain generalizations on a subject such as the monograph treats, but these sentences from pages 279 and 301 seem to sum up the whole matter of constitutional amendments in a few words:

"The wisdom of the members of the Convention of 1787 in defining the powers of the government in broad and general terms has become more and more evident as time has elapsed, for, owing to this fact, it has been possible to readily adapt the constitution to the changed conditions and circumstances of advancing years. The doctrine of implied powers has been accepted to such an extent that in the most important cases where amendments have been sought, the same results have been secured without their adoption.

"To a much smaller degree has it been possible to secure any change by these unwritten amendments of the provisions of the constitution prescribing the form of government, for here the constitution admits of less freedom of interpretation, being very much more explicit in its terms."

"Why," it may be asked, "have so few of the more than eighteen hundred propositions looking to the amendment of our fundamental law been successful? In part because some were suggested as cures for temporary evils, others were trivial or impracticable, still others found a place in that unwritten constitution which has grown up side by side with the written document, and whose provisions are often as effective as those contained in the organic law; but the real reason for the failure of those other amendments which have been called for repeatedly by the general public has been due to the insurmountable constitutional obstacles in their way."

B. C. STEINER.

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France. By JOHN EDWARD COURTENAY BODLEY. Two volumes. Pp. xviii, 850. Price, \$4.00. London and New York: The Macmillan Co., 1898.

The author of this work has spent seven years in France preparing himself for his task. He has mixed familiarly with many classes of French people, from the learned members of the Academy to artisans in provincial communes, and his book shows the thoroughness of his study. While we may not always agree with his conclusions, while we may think that the opinions he holds go sometimes to an

extreme, no one can fail to recognize that the book is both scholarly and profound. Its underlying principle, the dominant thought which is constantly brought forward, and around which all the author's views are centred, is the doctrine that the parliamentary system is irreconcilably contrary to the centralized administration that Napoleon fastened upon revolutionary France. Of the French Revolution Mr. Bodley says (Vol. I, p. 100): "Many of the men of 1789 began their work inspired with noble motives, but they neglected the precaution which the most elementary architects even among primitive peoples observe, not to destroy the foundations of a fabric which it is intended to re-model if it has to be inhabited during the reconstruction." The result was, of course, anarchy, from which, he tells us, France was delivered only by military conquest; and that conquest gave rise to a soldier who had a genius for government, and the capacity to understand Frenchmen. The secret of Napoleon's ability to reconstruct France, he adds, lay in the fact that he recognized the systematic disposition which the French like to see and feel in their government. It may be remarked by the way that the French showed little tendency of that kind under the old régime; but whether this characteristic antedates the Revolution or not, it is certain that the Napoleonic system has in its essential features survived every revolution unchanged, and appears to be far more deeply rooted in France than any form of government.

After discussing the historical aspects of the Revolution, and before taking up the existing political institutions, Mr. Bodley discusses the inexhaustible themes of liberty, equality and fraternity. The treatment of the last two of these is especially interesting; particularly the description of the influence of French schoolboy life on equality, and the simultaneous growth in France of the sentiment of patriotism and of the merciless cruelty of Frenchmen to one another in moments of great political excitement.

In the course of his description of the present French institutions the author dwells in a very forcible way upon some features of the government which deserve, unfortunately, all the criticism he applies to them. One of these is the position and activity of the Committee on the Budget, which weakens the authority of the ministry and makes sound financiering almost an impossibility. Another is the baneful influence exerted over the prefect and other administrative officers by the deputies and the electoral committees who stand behind them. Mr. Bodley, like almost all students of the subject, considers this evil the inevitable result of combining a centralized bureaucracy with a parliamentary system; and he points

out that although the deputies possess enormous political power and are treated with every show of respect by the executive and judicial officers in the provinces, they are, nevertheless, not held in high esteem by the country at large. This may seem a paradox, but it is not really so, for both results are due to one cause, the defective working of the parliamentary system. The individual deputies have acquired the control of a great deal of patronage which they ought not to possess, while, at the same time, the chamber has failed in its true mission as a body which can put into office and maintain there a really efficient cabinet. Both these things prevent many of the best men in France from going into public life, while, at the same time, they enable a small class of politicians to build up an influence which brings power without esteem.

The author has a chapter on corruption under the Republic, and in this he draws the picture quite as black as it is. There certainly must have been fire enough under the smoke of the Panama scandal; but to interpret the remark of Rouvier, the former minister of finance, to mean that a minister may properly use his official position to increase his private fortune up to a certain point is hardly a fair construction of his words. Rouvier said: * "*Je pourrais m'en tenir là, sortir d'ici la tête haute, les mains nettes, aller devant toutes les juridictions, ayant, comme je l'ai dit déjà, la conscience d'avoir traversé les plus grandes affaires de ce pays sans que le chiffre de ma fortune s'en soit accru anormalement.*" It is hardly to be supposed that a man about to be tried for corruption would have deliberately admitted that he had been guilty of making money out of his office to some extent; and that this is not his meaning is made clear by the end of his speech, where he declared that he had neither directly nor indirectly received anything from any financial company.

To return to the question of parliamentary government, Mr. Bodley insists, what no one who has watched the French chamber would venture to deny, that the parliamentary form of government cannot work without the party system—that is, the division of the chamber into two parties, one of which supports the ministry, while the other belongs to the opposition. This statement recurs again and again through the second volume, and in fact the last part of the book is devoted to an interesting study of the existing political groups. The author points out that the high standard of the House of Commons is maintained by the party system; which he calls the strongest purifying agent in parliamentary government under extended suffrage. Considering that parties are a natural

* *Journal Officiel*, séance du Dec. 21, 1892.

product which cannot be abolished at will, and considering that they exist and appear likely to continue to exist in Anglo-Saxon countries, it is consoling, after all we have heard of the evils of party, to hear something of the benefits they confer; for it is injurious, both to one's temper and one's morals, to believe that the inevitable conditions under which we live are hopelessly bad. Granting that the parliamentary form of government must fail without a party system, one naturally asks whether there is any chance that the latter may develop in France. On this point, Mr. Bodley has a very decided opinion; he thinks that it cannot; that it is contrary to the instincts and traditions of the French people, and hence that parliamentary government in France can never be a success. In fact, he would appear to be of opinion that the parliamentary system works as well as it can under French conditions; for he points out that as the chamber cannot control the ministry, a strong cabinet would be likely to dispense with the legislature altogether, and thus ministerial instability is the only possible form of ministerial responsibility. He is confident that a centralized administration is the only form of government which conforms to the wants and ideas of the French people, and hence that it cannot be abolished, and that at any time a strong man may arise who will make himself master of France and employ this tool as it was intended to be used. In fact, he considers such a government the best suited to the French people. In taking a view that would be termed in France reactionary, Mr. Bodley is not in the least influenced by attachment to any reactionary group. On the contrary, he has little respect for the Reactionaries or for most of their leaders. In one place he remarks (Vol. II, p. 354): "The bringing to scorn of monarchical sentiment in the minds of the French people has been chiefly due to the folly and perversity of the Royalist party; but the destruction of that particular form of it known as Orleanism was the almost unaided work of the Comte de Paris."

Without challenging the author's exposition of the facts, or his fundamental opinions, we may take a little more hopeful view of the future. In order that parliamentary government may work well with an extended suffrage, it is essential not only that the popular chamber, but also that the nation at large, should be divided into two parties. Now, in France this is not so. As Mr. Bodley truly says (Vol. II, p. 277): "In France the adventitious majority which puts a ministry out is no more representative of the nation's opinions or even of its temporary sentiment than is the minority which supports it." This is the reason that at general elections in France each district is fought for between the candidates with scant

regard to their relation to the cabinet in office. A striking illustration is given (Vol. II, p. 144) by the author: "I have before me," he says, "copies of several ardent local journals published during the electoral period of 1893 in places where controversy was most violent, and in not one of them, in endless columns of polemic and oratory, is the name of the then Prime Minister once mentioned either to praise or to blame him; nor that of the Minister he displaced, nor of any Minister or ex-Minister who had ever served the Republic except those connected with the district in which the newspaper circulated." So long as this is true, it is clearly absurd to expect any permanent loyalty on the part of the majority of the chamber to any particular cabinet. In England, at general elections, and in fact at all times, the parliamentary leaders, both those who are in the ministry and those in opposition, are continually making speeches over the country; and the general election turns on the question which of these two sets of leaders the country will support. Whereas, in France, it has not been the custom for any public man to speak during the campaign except in his own electoral district. Here, however, there comes a ray of hope, because for some months before the recent elections men prominent in public life, have undertaken to make stump speeches for the benefit of the nation at large. There has also been founded a national Conservative Republican Club similar to the English political clubs.

Some hope may be drawn from the very despondency of Frenchmen. Mr. Bodley tells us that pessimism is now more widespread than ever before, because (Vol. I, p. 39), "no one has a substitute to propose for the existing régime; while under every other its opponents solaced themselves with the thought that one day it could be dispensed with." Now, it is this very feeling which has hitherto made reform impossible in France. The men who did not like the existing government, instead of trying to make it better, have always been anxious to overturn it altogether, and to substitute another in its place. France has now no remedy of that sort to turn to, and hence there is a serious opportunity to improve without destroying the present institutions. In this way, it is conceivable that extreme centralization may be gradually modified and brought more into harmony with a parliamentary system. I do not say that this is probable, but simply that it is possible, for the mere absence of a utopia to be attained by revolution introduces into the problem a new element which may make possible that which could not have happened in the past.

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